

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, on July 28, 2005, I was present and did vote "aye" on rollcall vote No. 448, but was recorded as "not voting". I respectfully ask that the record show I did vote "aye" on final passage of H.R. 5, the HEALTH Act of 2005, but was not recorded.

40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965**HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, 40 years ago, on August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed a landmark piece of legislation, a turning point in our Nation's continuing struggle for equality, the Voting Rights Act of 1965. I rise today in honor of that momentous occasion.

Aristotle once wrote that "if liberty and equality . . . are chiefly to be found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost." More than 2,000 years after Aristotle's death, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said that "all men are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality." In 1965, this Congress passed the Voting Rights Act to ensure that all Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity, would be able to share in our government, to mutually enjoy the blessings of liberty and democracy.

Nevertheless, despite a constitutional guarantee of the right to vote, before the Voting Rights Act of 1965 became the law of the land, African Americans and other minority citizens were often forced to take a literacy test, pay a poll tax or overcome other often insurmountable barriers before they could vote. Those who could not pass the tests—which were, for the most part, absurdly unfair—or were too poor to pay the poll tax were denied the most basic right of all Americans: the right to take part in the selection of their Nation's leaders. President John F. Kennedy once said, "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future."

It was the hope of the Johnson administration and this body that the Voting Rights Act would be a solution and bring to an end these and other measures that compromised the legitimacy of our democracy. President Johnson told his Vice President, Hubert Humphrey, that he wanted for all citizens "the right to vote with no ifs, ands, or buts—that's the key." It was his dream—and that of American men and women from every walk of life—to unquestionably ensure the benefits and responsibilities of citizenship to all Americans.

For the most part, the bill has been successful. Under Section 2 of the Act, for example, Congress prohibited the use of literacy tests throughout the country. They also identified those parts of the Nation with the greatest

potential for discriminatory activity and mandated Federal oversight of these locations. With these measures and others, the Voting Rights Act became perhaps the most effective piece of civil rights legislation in history.

In my home state of Louisiana, 31.6 percent of African Americans were registered to vote in 1965, compared to 80.5 percent of whites. A little more than 30 years later, registration rates among African Americans climbed to 77.1 percent in the State, a jump of almost 50 percent and fully 2 percent higher than the rate of registration for whites. Such change in a comparatively short period is remarkable by a number of measures, not only making our democracy more inclusive, but also changing the face of our government.

The legislation also brought to fruition a government that more closely resembles the makeup of our population. The Civil Rights Coalition reports that "in 1964, there were only approximately 300 African Americans in public office nationwide, including just three in Congress. There are now more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 43 members of Congress, the largest number ever."

Despite these encouraging numbers, the VRA remains necessary to the continuing struggle to truly open our great experiment in Democracy to all. The results of the 2000 election proved to our country that we have yet to achieve the equality and democracy necessary, as Dr. King put it, to "live out the true meaning of our creed." Every American citizen who wishes to do so is entitled to have their voice heard and their vote counted—when that right is so blatantly ignored, we appear to regress to a time when the decision making process was reserved for the few and the powerful.

The passage of the Voting Rights Act 40 years ago today was a milestone in legislative history. This Congress defended the civil liberties of every American citizen, regardless of race or ethnicity. However, we cannot let our progress overshadow the very hard work that remains. Forty years on, every election still brings stories of voter intimidation, suppression and discrimination. It is incumbent upon us to secure the franchise, the most fundamental right of every American, and its exercise. Accordingly, we must continue to build on the sacrifices of ordinary men and women who became the heroes of equality and to uphold our promise to guarantee voting rights to every American citizen and ensure that it is carried out to the fullest.

Mr. Speaker, on this anniversary, I urge my colleagues to renew our collective commitment to the fundamental American principles that underlie the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

WISHING A HAPPY 50TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY TO BENJAMIN
AND MARSHA EMANUEL**HON. RAHM EMANUEL**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a milestone in the lives of my parents, Benjamin and Marsha Emanuel. On August 21, 2005, they will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. On behalf of their four children and eleven grandchildren, I'd like to

take this opportunity to wish them a very happy golden anniversary.

My father, Dr. Benjamin Emanuel, was born in Israel and moved to Chicago. While he was completing his medical residency he met my mother Marsha Smulevitz, a nurse in the same hospital. They were married on August 21, 1955, and settled in Chicago's North Andersonville neighborhood where they went on to raise four children in a loving home where we learned the values of public service and compassion which continue to guide me to this day.

My mother is a loving and caring person with a remarkable history of serving the greater good. In the early 1960's, she served 4 years on the Congress of Racial Equality, founded by students at the University of Chicago, and participated in Freedom Marches in the South. She went on to earn an advanced degree in social work from Northeastern Illinois University. For over 20 years, my mother has maintained her commitment to public service by working as a social worker and counselor to local children and adults.

My father was a practicing pediatrician on Chicago's North Side for over 40 years and continues to volunteer at Children's Memorial Hospital. My constituents in the Illinois Fifth District include many former patients of my father, and people often tell me of how much his life's work has meant to them.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be the son of Benjamin and Marsha Emanuel, and I want to thank them for all of their love and support through the years. I ask that my colleagues please join me in wishing these two extraordinary people a very happy 50th wedding anniversary.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL
AMERICA-UNITED STATES FREE
TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMEN-
TATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. KENNY C. HULSHOF

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement, DR-CAFTA, as it will level the playing field for American manufacturers and farmers. The six DR-CAFTA countries, which include the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Honduras, have had preferential access to U.S. markets for approximately 20 years as a result of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, CBI, and the Generalized System of Preferences, GSP, program. Consequently, DR-CAFTA countries have enjoyed a "one-way street" of market access where by 80 percent of goods and almost 99 percent of agricultural products enter duty free. Conversely, American exporters have faced tariffs on almost all of the goods exported to the region.

It is vital to my home State of Missouri that we continue to expand and open new markets for American farm products. In 2003, 25 percent of Missouri's \$5 billion farm cash receipts were attributable to foreign trade. Half of all soybeans and 1 in 5 rows of corn grown in Missouri are destined for foreign markets. Absent DR-CAFTA, American farm exports will

continue being subject to tariffs ranging from 35 percent to 60 percent. This puts our farmers and ranchers at a significant competitive disadvantage with our international competitors in these growing markets. It would be foolish to turn our backs on an agreement that removes these sort of punitive barriers to our products. If we pass DR-CAFTA, we will open the doors to six countries where the potential U.S. gain for all agricultural exports is expected to reach \$1.5 billion. Put another way, this would mean a near doubling of the U.S. agricultural sales to the region when compared to 2003 levels.

It is for this reason that DR-CAFTA enjoys the strong support of the American Farm Bureau Federation, the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, the National Pork Producers Council, the National Cattlemen's Beef Association, the USA Rice Federation, the National Association of Wheat Growers and the National Milk Producers Federation, just to name a few. To borrow from Farm Bureau, a vote for DR-CAFTA is a vote for agriculture.

There are many critics who erroneously believe that by ratifying DR-CAFTA, the United States is relinquishing our national sovereignty and opening our borders to floods of immigrants. On the contrary, nothing in the DR-CAFTA will preempt the Constitution, current U.S. laws and our sovereignty. Should a contradiction arise between the terms of DR-CAFTA and U.S. law, the U.S. will maintain its right to change domestic laws as it sees fit.

Moreover, enactment of DR-CAFTA will have no effect on current immigration laws. Congress will maintain its role in crafting U.S. immigration policy. And in fact, DR-CAFTA will help reduce illegal immigration. As the economic opportunities that accompany free market reforms take a stronger hold in Central America, residents of these nations will have a stake in their future and a strong fiscal incentive to remain in their native country.

DR-CAFTA is in our national security interests. Our foreign policy must promote stability and prosperity in Central America. As we saw in the 1980's, instability can give nations who do not share our interests an opportunity to expand their influence in our hemisphere. To promote stability, we should reward democracies that respect human rights and encourage free market economic principles. DR-CAFTA is consistent with this goal. As these evolving democracies continue to grow, we will see their economic viability strengthened, thereby creating jobs and reducing poverty.

Some have expressed concern that DR-CAFTA will weaken labor laws, leaving workers in this region without basic protections. This is simply not true. The International Labor Organization (ILO) has reviewed the labor laws and practices of the six DR-CAFTA countries and found them largely in compliance with the ILO's eight core conventions. With the exception of El Salvador—which has ratified six—every other nation covered by DR-CAFTA has enacted the eight core conventions. In fact, if you look at the labor provisions of other recently enacted free trade agreements, such as the Jordan and Morocco agreements, you will find that the DR-CAFTA labor provisions are more stringent and ensure greater protections for workers.

Over 95 percent of the world's consumers live outside our borders, and it is in our best

interests to pursue a policy that opens these markets to American products. If we fail, we forfeit these markets—both from an economic and national security standpoint—to our international competitors in Asia and Europe.

DR-CAFTA will level the playing field for American farmers and manufacturers and help address an important national security goal. This is a win-win situation. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this vital agreement.

IN RECOGNITION OF CHRISTOPHER J. TAYLOR

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 29, 2005

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Christopher J. Taylor, 22, of Opelika, Alabama, died on July 24, 2005, in Iraq. Sergeant Taylor was assigned to B Battery, 1st Battalion, 41st Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, at Fort Stewart, Georgia, and according to initial reports died when he was struck by indirect fire on a Coalition forces base. His survivors include his wife Janina, his son Xavier; and his daughter Aaliyah.

Christopher Taylor was proud to serve his country, Mr. Speaker. He was a graduate of Opelika High School and was known in the community as a loving friend and father. Like every soldier, he dutifully left behind his young family and loved ones to serve our country overseas.

Words cannot express the sense of sadness we have for his family, and for the gratitude our country feels for his service. Sergeant Taylor died serving not just the United States, but the entire cause of liberty, on a noble mission to help spread the cause of freedom in Iraq and liberate an oppressed people from tyrannical rule. He was a true American.

We will forever hold him closely in our hearts, and remember his sacrifice and that of his family as a remembrance of his bravery and willingness to serve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the House's remembrance on this mournful day.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 6, ENERGY POLICY ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the energy bill conference report, but I do so with very strong reservations. Although I believe we missed many opportunities to make this energy bill truly comprehensive, I also believe that the conference report is an improvement over the House-passed energy bill.

It is a sad indictment of the way the Majority is running this Congress that it has taken us 5 years to pass an energy bill and the final product falls far short of what I believe the American public wants. I will vote for this conference report, but this bill lacks boldness and vision. There is more we can and must do to

reduce our dependence on foreign oil, lower skyrocketing gas prices, protect our environment, and steer our country in a more forward-thinking direction on energy policy. I am pleased, however, that the bill makes strides in encouraging alternative energy research and production. Specifically, \$3.2 billion is included for renewable energy production incentives and \$1.3 billion is allotted for energy efficiency and conservation.

I was disappointed to see that a Renewable Portfolio Standard, RPS, was not included in the bill. The Senate-passed bill included an RPS that would have required utilities to generate 10 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, biomass, and geothermal, by the year 2020. Studies conducted by the Energy Information Administration illustrate that a federal RPS could save consumers \$19 billion. Moreover, 20 States have already enacted RPS requirement, many of which go beyond the Senate-passed provision. A federal RPS would have established a nationwide market-based trading system to ensure that renewables are developed at the lowest possible price. I strongly supported this provision, and over 70 of my colleagues signed onto a letter with me to conferees urging them to keep the RPS in the bill. The Senate conferees voted in a bipartisan manner to keep the RPS in the bill, but the House conferees stripped the provision. I hope that my colleagues will work with me in the future to support H.R. 983, a bill with bipartisan support that I introduced to create a federal RPS of 20 percent by 2027. The time for a federal RPS has come.

We also missed an opportunity to address the serious problem of global warming. I believe that the amendment Senator BINGAMAN offered, and that passed, expressing the sense of the Senate that mandatory action on climate change should be enacted was an important step towards congressional action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. While I am disappointed that we could not do more, and that this sense of the Senate amendment was stripped from the conference report, I am pleased that the conference report includes a provision to establish a new cabinet-level advisory committee, charged with developing a national policy to address climate change and to promote technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, the provision allows the Energy Department to authorize demonstration projects designed to test technologies that limit harmful emissions. The long-term solution to solving the global warming problem lies in the creation of new technologies and the Federal Government has a key role to play in promoting technological innovations. I believe we should have done more, something along the lines of the recommendations made recently by the National Commission on Energy Policy, but it is critical that we do something, and this climate change provision is the least we can do to begin the process of slowing global warming.

I am very pleased that a provision included in the House-passed bill, giving \$30 million to uranium mining companies, was stripped from the bill. If enacted, this provision would have posed a grave threat to the water resources of two Navajo communities in northwestern New Mexico where four uranium in-situ leach mines have been granted conditional licenses by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The proposed ISL mining—which could still happen